



THE A.



Counsellor

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MINISTERS OUTLINE NEW PROGRAM

CLOSE RELATIONSHIP SHOWN

LOCAL TAX BASE BROADENED

A revolutionary new system of financing school costs was outlined in the Alberta Legislature on February 24 by Hon. A.J. Hooke, Minister of Municipal Affairs. Under it all municipalities will contribute a maximum of 32 mills on equalized assessment towards the cost of Alberta's educational system with the Provincial Treasury paying the balance up to a standard of approved services called a "foundation" program. Local authorities wishing to go beyond the foundation program may do so, but at the expense of the ratepayers concerned.



HON. A.J. HOOKE

Introduced by Mr. Hooke along with the new system of school finance was a far-reaching program designed to provide a more equitable basis of taxation in Alberta's municipalities. The new program includes the following provisions:

- o Provincially-owned properties (including the Alberta Government Telephones) will be assessed and taxed.
 - o Municipally-owned property will also be assessed and added into total equalized assessment upon which the 32 mill requisition is to be levied.
- * * * * *
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SIX-POINT FOUNDATION PROGRAM

SCHOOL FINANCES REVISED

(Text of part of an address by Hon. A.O. Aalborg, Minister of Education, to the Legislature on February 27)

The first major difference between the present system of school financing and the system now being proposed by the Government is that the Department of Education would requisition all municipalities

at a uniform mill rate on equalized assessments. The Department of Municipal Affairs would supply the Department of Education with a set of equalized assessments for each city, town, village, rural municipal district, county and improvement district in the Province. The Department of Education would then apply a mill rate authorized by legislation to the equalized assessment of each municipality and the resulting amount would be the requisition upon that municipality. If, for example, the equalized assessment of a municipality is \$10,000,000 and the uniform mill rate is 32 mills, then the annual



HON. A.O. AALBORG

requisition of the Department on the municipality would be \$320,000. The municipality would then remit this amount, \$320,000, in quarterly instalments to the Department. It should be clearly borne in mind that the mill rate actually levied by a municipality may not be the same as the uniform rate used to calculate the requisition. The rate

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LEGISLATIVE OPENING - Premier Ernest C. Manning escorts Lieutenant Governor J. Percy Page and military aides into Alberta's Legislative Chamber where Mr. Page read the Speech from the Throne, a part of which is quoted below. o Alberta Government Photo

MUNICIPAL LEGISLATION FEATURED

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Legislation authorizing a new program of school financing and providing a more equitable tax basis for real property were two references highlighting the Speech from the Throne read at the opening of the Alberta Legislature February 16 by Lieutenant Governor J. Percy Page. In the Speech sympathy of the Assembly was extended to families bereaved as a result of the Lamont tragedy and "special attention" was promised to the "elimination, as far as possible, of the hazards created by level and unprotected railway crossings."

ALL-TIME LIVESTOCK RECORD

Slower economic development was noted but "generally satisfactory" climatic conditions had resulted in "above average yields of grain crops and adequate feed supplies for the all-time high volume of livestock currently on Alberta farms". Increased agricultural services to keep pace with "this expansion of the livestock industry" will include further development of community pastures and greater control of livestock diseases.

The Throne Speech continues:

Having regard to the concern of municipal and school ratepayers
(To Page 6)

THE

SECOND

PAGE . . .

PRELUDE
By Harriet Plimpton

The wide grey quill of the stream is bright at the foot
of the hill.
And the wind flushes dark-plumed clouds,
Till the brightness slides from the river.
Elms and the cedars stir;
And a few scattered raindrops hurry,
Like figures hooded in grey,
And cold at the edge of night.
There is more than rain in this,
This solid grey wall advancing, blotting out stream
and trees,
Till I can't even see the road.

o Out of the North

HOLD THAT LINE!

Last time we ventured into the realm of public finance, we were told such things were none of our business. The blast, we thought, was unwarranted. It was also plum nonsense. Budgets and taxes and public money is everybody's business.

Now we've long entertained the conviction that by and large our municipal tax dollar is purchasing a lot of real value. Included is a large share of the cost of our school system and the training this means for our children. Likewise we're helping to provide hospital care. And of course there are our streets, roads and sidewalks, water and sewer, fire and police protection, parks and playgrounds, libraries, street lighting, recreational facilities and public buildings.

All these things cost a lot of money. They are being provided simply because we want them and have in fact demanded them. In other words, we call the tune. Then why should we complain about the piper's fee?

It's been said more than once that unless something is done, we can expect our tax bill to keep on climbing ... year after year. It's been said too that our tax load can increase considerably before it bulges out of proportion to the rest of our spending. Constituted as we are, neither of these statements inspires our enthusiasm, but we've got to admit that logic is on their side.

Be that as it may, we submit that efforts to hold the line, now being seriously made, deserve our wholehearted support. Here may be the "something" we've been waiting for. Tax payers (and especially those who feel the limit is long gone) should cheer it to the echo.

The term probably originated on the football field but it applies with equal authority to the field of finance. In football, holding the line is a matter of dogged determination and brute strength. In public finance it should be a gentler business but requiring no less strength of will ... because if we are sincere about this thing, it must be agreed that new services and further salary increases must be held over.

Let's add it up. Our public services are just about the biggest bargain on the market today. Our taxes may even be moderate in proportion to some of our other bills. Our simple choice is either hold the line or pay higher taxes.

A decision must be made here ... and to be effective, everybody must share in its making. Like we said before, it's everybody's business.

"A MAGNIFICENT JOB"

... There can be no doubt that Alberta has the best Town and Rural Planning Act and regulations in Canada, perhaps in North America.

The Province has done a magnificent job on subdivision regulations so that developers have more opportunities than ever to make economies. Problems are not nearly as serious here as in the rest of Canada.

o Ed Grah, Business Editor, Albertan

From The Saturday Evening Post - November 20, 1948

I GET MY MONEY'S WORTH

By Carl J. Faist

I am an ordinary citizen in a typical American city. My salary is \$5,880 a year. I live in a house which is assessed at \$4,250. Last year my taxes were \$1,174.78. Of this amount, my local taxes amounted to only \$95.18.

For my city tax I get police and fire protection day and night the year round. I get pure water delivered to my home, and the garbage and sewage removed. I get traffic lights to drive by, street lights, bridges, sidewalks, pavements and a goodly number of parks and playgrounds. I get health protection through the city's food, milk, restaurant and sanitary inspection. The street in front of my house was cleaned ten times last summer and the snow was removed six times in the winter. For my school tax I have been permitted to send two daughters through grade school and high school. All these things are mighty important to me, and cost only \$95.18 last year.

Now what about my federal taxes of \$1,079.60—11 times these local taxes—about one-fifth of my entire income? They go to support the Congress, the Supreme Court, the Army, Navy and Air Force—that I know. It is worth a good deal to me to have these strong defenses against potential enemies both at home and abroad. But we sometimes lose sight of the purpose of local taxes and how low they actually are in comparison with federal taxes.

I don't mean just the federal income tax. There's also the tax on cigarettes, the transportation tax, the telephone tax, the admissions tax, the processing tax, the oil and gasoline tax, the tax on luggage, tires and many other commodities. There are probably 60 different taxes involved in every loaf of bread you buy!

Perhaps some of these federal costs ought to be local ones. When we need a new bridge or an addition to the airport, we go down to Washington for the money. It is called a "federal grant," but it looks like some of our own tax money coming back to us, with a great many restrictions as to its use. For every dollar we get back this way, I'll venture to guess that another dollar is eaten up in federal administrative expense—collecting it from us in the first place, telling us how, when and where we may spend it, then compiling voluminous statistics about it afterward. Certainly it is not a gratuity, as some might think.

Municipal services are so much a part of every citizen's life that they are often taken for granted. Few of us realize the effect they have upon our homes and business, our health, education, safety and recreation.

But paying is an essential to having. We must pay our teachers, our firemen, our sewer-diggers, our health department nurses, our policemen, our judges and our street cleaners. The alternative is to do this work ourselves. To get competent municipal employees we must pay prevailing wages too. Local taxes are the most convenient method of sharing these costs.

The emphasis in recent years has been upon our obligations to the nation. Let us also recognize our local citizenship and the opportunity it affords to improve our way of life if we exercise self-government intelligently.

o Quoted in The Reader's Digest

THIS MONTH

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LOCAL TAX BASE BROADENED

(From Page 1)

o There will be no change from the present method of assessing and taxing industrial plants, except that beginning in 1962, the assessment of machinery and equipment subject to taxation will be taxable at 30% instead of the 60% which is now applicable.

o Power lines and pipelines will be assessed and taxed in all municipalities.

o Exemption of churches, hospitals and schools will remain.

o Farm buildings, rural electrification lines and mutual telephone systems will not be taxed.

o Sewer and water systems will not be taxed.

o The first three changes mentioned above will be made effective in 1962 with the tax on power and pipe lines to be applied from July 1, 1961.

In an address lasting over two hours, Mr. Hooke said details of the foundation program in education will be presented to the Legislature by Hon. A.O. Aalborg, Minister of Education. The proposed program would provide an approved standard "sufficiently generous" for an adequate school program. Inasmuch as the new plan allowed for greater control of school mill rate, he saw it having a stabilizing effect on what 'till now has been a constantly increasing spiral of school costs. The Provincial total of equalized assessments is expected to rise by about 8 per cent per year and this, the Minister continued, should enable the maximum requisition rate of 32 mills to remain unchanged.

Earlier in his address Mr. Hooke traced the development of local government in Alberta from the first organized school district (Edmonton) in 1884 and the early fire and statute labor districts to the present day. Also traced was the rise and decline of provincial debt and the increased debt of municipalities. The Minister stressed the fact that regardless of how it is incurred, the same people are responsible for all public debt.

A feature of Mr. Hooke's address was his remarks regarding the long-standing question of amalgamation. Observing that the new system of taxation will do indirectly what the industrial tax discussed last year attempted to do directly, he said the whole amalgamation question could now be considered "with the dollar sign completely removed". He said the new program was the result of "countless" hours of intensive study by members of the Provincial-Municipal Advisory Committee and of numerous consultations over a two-year period with representatives of power and pipe line companies as well as industrialists and municipal authorities. He said the Committee several times had discussed the program with H. Carl Goldenberg, eminent municipal authority from Montreal, who the Minister said "endorses our program in its entirety".

Mr. Hooke pointed out an advantage of the new program over removing industrial plants from municipal tax rolls was that it would enhance rather than interfere with the autonomy of local governments.

Mr. Hooke dealt at some length with the question of exemptions, spelling out reasons why several classes of property are to be left unchanged. Rural Electrification Association lines will continue to be exempt, he said, because owners of the lines will already be helping to pay taxes passed on by power companies to consumers in increased rates. Rural Mutual Telephones will remain exempt because their scope and their present general condition do not seem to merit taxation. Farm people are assessed and taxed on their land to a level which the Minister pointed out approximates the usual assessed value of an urban lot plus residential improvements.

Turning to industry, Mr. Hooke said many of Alberta's industrial plants are being taxed more heavily than similar plants located in other provinces and so it was considered fair to reduce their tax burden slightly by using fifty rather than one hundred per cent of the assessed value of their machinery and equipment as a basis for taxation. The measure of tax relief resulting from this provision was seen as an incentive for continued industrial development in this Province.

Schools, hospitals and churches would remain on the list of exemptions, Mr. Hooke explained, but other municipally-owned buildings would be assessed and subject to the 32 mill requisition under the new plan. Provincially-owned property will be added to municipal tax rolls wherever they are located. The 32 mill levy will apply to them but in addition the local municipality will collect from the government the municipal tax thereon.

SCHOOL FINANCES REVISED

(From Page 1)

levied by the municipality will be on the actual assessment rather than upon the equalized assessment. Thus in the example which I mentioned where the equalized assessment is \$10,000,000 the actual assessment may be, let us say, \$12,000,000 and in that event the mill rate necessary to obtain a requisition of \$320,000 need be only about 27 mills; on the other hand, if the actual assessment in this case was only \$9,000,000 then the mill rate would have to be nearly 35 mills to yield \$320,000. Municipalities may wish to add something to the actual levy to allow for discounts and non-collection of taxes, but care would be taken to ensure that no municipality would impose an unreasonable levy to collect this requisition from its ratepayers.

The requisitions collected by the Department from all municipalities throughout the Province would be placed in a special fund, and to this fund would be added an annual appropriation voted by the Legislature. These requisitions would not be collected into the general revenue of the Province because this would, of course, greatly distort the Provincial Budget—nor is it likely that they could be retained by each municipality for distribution to local school authorities during the first year or two of the operation of the new plan. Later, in the light of experience, it may be possible to arrange for distribution at the local level, but in the initial stages this would seem to present administrative problems and complexities that would be very difficult to overcome.

DISTRIBUTION OF FOUNDATION PROGRAM FUNDS

The second major difference in the Government's proposed new program of school financing is that instead of making operational grants to each school district, division and county in the Province to meet a portion of the cost of operating their systems, the Department would distribute the moneys in the special fund made up of requisitions collected from all municipalities and the legislative appropriation, in accordance with a formula which would, in the great majority of cases, furnish these local school authorities with all or very nearly all of the funds needed to operate their systems.

For many years the operational grants paid by the Department to school boards have been based on the operations of the previous year, that is to say, the operational grants in 1960 were based on operations during the school year 1959/60. This made it possible to calculate grants very precisely. Since payments under the proposed system would be based on current rather than past operations, estimates during the first year, at least, cannot be nearly as accurate. There would probably have to be many adjustments and modifications during the course of the year. To obtain payments under the proposed plan school boards would submit claims to the Department at the end of each three-month period in a form prepared by the Department and calculated in accordance with the foundation program formula. These claims would then be processed and approved by the Department.

FOUNDATION PROGRAM FORMULA

The foundation program formula would be designed to provide a fair and equitable distribution of the moneys placed in the special fund in such a way as to ensure the provision of an adequate minimum standard of elementary and secondary school services throughout the Province. The formula would be as simple and practical as possible, and studies to date suggest that it should consist of six cost factors: instruction; transportation; operation and maintenance of school plant; instructional aids; debenture repayments and administration.

Instruction

This factor is related to the number of pupils in attendance and the number of teachers employed. It is felt that a fixed amount should be paid for each teacher employed, which would vary according to the qualifications of the teacher; and that a further fixed amount should be paid for each pupil in attendance. If payments to meet the cost of instruction were related only to the number of teachers employed there might be a tendency to overstaff; on the other hand, if payments were related only to the number of pupils in attendance there might be a tendency to overcrowd classrooms and engage teachers with minimum qualifications. A combination of both, such as is contemplated, will probably bring about a proper balance between these tendencies and produce the best results. Since payment of teachers' salaries is the greatest single item of expenditure for all school boards the factor of instruction will, of course, be the largest factor in the formula.

Transportation

The main purpose of this factor will be to provide counties and school divisions in rural areas of the Province with funds necessary

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THE PROGRESS OF OUR COMMUNITY PASTURES

BY HON. L.C. HALMRAST, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

The Land & Forest Utilization Act provides for a committee to make recommendations to the Government as to the best use for marginal and sub-marginal lands. Set up in 1956, the Committee consists of senior civil servants from several Departments of the public service.

Farmers have requested the Government to establish more community pastures throughout the Province and, as a result of these requests, a program has been worked out to meet that need. The Department of Agriculture is responsible for setting up pastures under The Land & Forest Utilization Act after which they are turned over to the Department of Lands & Forests for administration.

The first pasture recommended by the Committee was in the Eagle Municipality and is known as the Rannock pasture. This pasture is located approximately eight miles east of Two Hills and was the first major project undertaken by the aforementioned committee. The land was acquired by purchase from individuals, C.P.R., and the local municipality. A total of 9,861 acres was purchased, plus an additional 1,120 acres of Crown land which had never been sold. The pasture actually includes a total of 11,231 acres when one allows approximately 250 acres for the road allowances, which were closed. Of the total acres, 2,540 were at one time cultivated and all have been seeded to a mixture of brome, creeping red fescue, crested wheat and alsike. The area has been perimeter fenced and cross fenced with four strand barbed wire on posts one rod apart. Suitable corrals for the sorting of cattle and a small bunk house at the corral site were built. A farm home was acquired and remodelled for occupancy by the caretaker.

During 1958 approximately 500 cattle were in the Rannock pasture. The numbers were purposely limited so as to allow the grass to become well established. In 1959, a total of 878 mature head and approximately 400 suckling calves were in the pasture. In both years, cattle came off this pasture in excellent shape.

In April 1958, the Committee recommended the establishment of a community pasture in the Minburn district located approximately eight miles directly south of Minburn. This pasture contains a total of 10,768.24 acres and has 2,062 acres which were previously cultivated. The cultivated land was seeded to the same grass mixture as at Rannock. The total area of this pasture, including road allowances, would be approximately 11,068.24 acres. This pasture is located on rolling topography and much of the land is open native prairie wool.

A start was made during 1960 on the fencing of 12 sections toward the north end of the Minburn pasture. Suitable sorting corrals have been built and a farm home acquired for the caretaker. It is anticipated that this pasture will officially be opened in the spring of 1961 with a full-fledged caretaker and will carry approximately 600-700 head. It is not expected that the pasture will be stocked to capacity until 1962 because it is anticipated the fencing will not be completed until mid-summer or early fall of 1961.



CORRAL AT LEA PARK - A small forest of poles form sorting pens at which annual sale is held. (Photos by J. Campbell)

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS BY W.H. MacDONALD,
DEPARTMENT of LANDS & FORESTS

In April 1959, a pasture was started on land which has reverted to the Department of Lands & Forests on the Wanham Project. These lands were seeded during the summer of 1959 and fencing is presently in progress. At the moment the Wanham pasture will include a total of 6,400 acres with 4,622 acres previously cultivated and reseeded. This pasture will probably increase in size because there are still a few units to obtain before blocks of land can be connected. The block of land which will be ready for grazing in 1961 contains approximately 2,294 cultivated acres.

On December 4, 1959, the Committee recommended the establishment of seven community pastures on irrigated land in the southern part of the Province. The following table gives the general location of each, the total amount of land in each, and the total irrigated land in each.

Location	Size	Under Irrigation
Grassy Lake	2,880 acres	1,233 acres
Burdett	688	310
Bow Island	1,281	624
Seven Persons	2,867	1,532
Medicine Hat	3,026	1,873
B. R. D. North Pasture ...	3,664	1,737
B. R. D. East Pasture	8,762	2,675

The Committee has recommended that \$50,000 be spent in each year over a ten year period toward the completion of the aforementioned pastures. A start was made during 1960 on the Seven Persons pasture where the following work was done:

- (a) A total of 302.7 acres was levelled, seeded to fall rye and irrigated.
- (b) The necessary irrigation ditches, drop structures, etc., were constructed.

The Seven Persons land will be seeded to a permanent grass mixture in 1961, fenced and possibly a few cattle pastured on the permit basis.

It is anticipated that development will progress on these pastures over the next ten years. The Government has approved the expenditure of \$500,00 for these projects.

Other areas have requested assistance in the establishment of community pastures. The following table gives the general location and the total acreage of land involved in each:

General Location	Approximate Acreage
Ponoka	91,520
Smoky Lake	9,600
Stony Plain	30,869
Thorhild	29,440
Westlock	10,240
Wetaskiwin	13,440

These pastures are in various stages of development but no seeding or fencing has as yet been done on any of them. It is hoped that considerable progress will be made during 1961.

* * * * *

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

(Note: As Mr. Halmrast points out, community pastures in Alberta are a cooperative undertaking inasmuch as they are set up by the Department of Agriculture and administered by the Department of Lands and Forests. In an effort to get some of the facts pertaining to the latter Department, we asked a series of ten questions.

The answers are by W.H. MacDonald, Publicity Officer with the Department of Lands and Forests. ED.)

1. Is there any difference between community pastures and grazing leases held by grazing Associations?

A. The phrase "community pastures" is used somewhat loosely to describe two separate agencies. One is a grazing lease composed of both Crown land and deeded land, title for which is usually held by the Department of Lands and Forests and a lease extended to a Graz-



SIZING UP A HERD - Farmers and ranchers hold a field day at stockyard near Lea Park community pasture north west of Lloydminster.



WAITING FOR AUCTION - Close-up of quality whiteface cattle show benefits of good season in pasture.

ing Association. Deeded land that is required in a specific area to round out a grazing lease is purchased by the government and hence returned to the Crown. The lease is operated by a Grazing Association, organized from among district farmers and they are charged rental for the land which they lease. At March 31, 1960, there were 48 Grazing Associations operating in Alberta on leases obtained from the Crown. The leases ranged in size from 570 acres at Keg River to over 82,000 acres at Lomond. The total acreage is in the neighborhood of one half million acres. In all, they have a carrying capacity sufficient to graze about 30,000 head of cattle for a period of six months in each year.

2. What is a Provincial Grazing Reserve?

A. The second type of pasture is called a Provincial Grazing Reserve. There are seven of these established or being incorporated and, with one exception, they are composed of Crown land. Five are listed in the current Lands and Forests Annual Report and two have been added since. These are the Minburn grazing reserve and the South Park Wainwright grazing reserve. Grazing reserves are operated by the Department of Lands and Forests and a caretaker is appointed and paid by the Government to supervise the operation. The Government is assisted in this respect by a district Advisory Council which represents the individual farmer and negotiates with the Government and the farmers for reasonable allotment of grazing rights. Total area, including established pastures and some regions presently being negotiated for, is approximately 200,000 acres. The carrying capacity is estimated to be sufficient to accommodate 6,774 head of cattle for six months in each year.

3. Is the land taken into community pastures good for any other purpose?

A. I am advised that much of the land incorporated in community pastures is good grazing land and is selected for that reason. There may be some sub-marginal land involved but community pastures are not simply established to make some token use of such sub-marginal land, as the question implies.

4. Is the operation of these pastures subsidized by the Province?

A. No subsidy is provided by Government for the operation of either grazing association leases or grazing reserves. Capital expenditures are amortized by the payment of lease or grazing fees.

5. Who hold title?

A. Title in most cases is held by the Crown though permission has been acquired in one or two places to incorporate some deeded land without transferring title.

6. Who is eligible to run cattle in grazing leases or reserves?

A. Eligibility is decided by the Grazing Association or advisory council in cooperation with the Government. A set of regulations classifies applicants for grazing rights in terms of their need to supplement other grazing facilities and their location in relation to the nearest community pasture.

7. Are they profitable for those with cattle?

A. The answer to your question is self-evident: If the pastures were not profitable they would not be used.

8. To whom are grazing fees paid?

A. Grazing associations pay a lease or rental fee to the Government and users of grazing reserves pay a grazing fee for the privilege.

9. Are any horses being pastured?

A. A small number of horses are being pastured on association leases; none on Crown reserves.

10. What are some of the duties of a "Caretaker"?

A. The duties of the caretaker include salting and herding (to secure optimum use of the grazing area) inspection of animals, fences, gates etc., and maintenance of all fixtures. He must have some ability in veterinary science, sufficient to enable him to recognize sick or diseased cattle and so to secure the necessary services. He keeps records as to numbers of cattle, length of grazing time, owners names and brands etc.



SECRETARY'S CALENDAR

Municipal District Act

Every Month-Within 5 days after the end of each month secretary-treasurer shall prepare statements of moneys received and their disposition, submit to council at next meeting and enter a copy in the minutes. Sec. 61(v).

April 4 - Terms of office of some councillors commence. Sec. 32 and 33.

April 4 - First meeting of council. Sec. 39.

April 4 - Election of reeve. Sec. 36(1), and deputy reeve. Sec. 37(1).

Appointment of representatives to Boards of Trustees. Sec. 52(2).

April 4 - Appointment of auditor. Sec. 66(1).

April 4 - Appointment of assessor. Sec. 64.

April 9 - Notice to Minister of elections. Sec. 61(1).

April 30 - Prior to May 1 reeve shall produce to council securities given by officials. Sec. 81(1).

April 30 - By-law providing discount of not more than 6% or repealing or amending same, not effective unless passed prior to May 1st. Sec. 350.

Preparation of the estimates as soon as practicable each year. Sec. 331.

Town and Village Act

15th-Secretary-treasurer shall prepare statement of moneys received and their disposition, submit to council at next meeting and enter in minutes. Sec. 67(r).

April 30 - By-law providing discount of not more than 6% or repealing or amending same, not effective unless passed prior to May 1st. Sec. 374.

April 30 - Business tax by-law by May 1st (if applicable). Sec. 62 (Assessment Act).

Prepare estimate of Revenue and Expenditure (as soon as practicable). Sec. 353(1) (Town and Village Act).

Set mill rates including business tax, if applicable (as soon as practicable). Sec. 353 (Town and Village Act).

April 30 - Examination of secretary-treasurer's bond before May 1st. Sec. 66(4).

Assessment Act

April 30 - Town or village may by resolution passed before May 1st requisition Supervisor of Assessments to assess land, buildings and improvements. Sec. 71(4).

April 30 - By-law amending business tax shall be passed prior to May 1st unless approved by the Supervisor of Assessments. Sec. 63.

Tax Recovery Act

April 1 - Every parcel with subsisting tax recovery notification shall be offered for sale within 3 years from April 1st of the year in which tax notification is registered. Sec. 9.

TOWN OF THE MONTH

... Also modern fire fighting equipment



NORTHWEST of the TOWN: TRAVERS DAM . . . "By 1955 the Expanse Coulee siphon, the Scope Reservoir and the Travers Dam had been completed . . ."

VAUXHALL . . . HOW IT BEGAN

Fraser Perry in The Lethbridge Herald

(Vauxhall, 50 miles northeast of Lethbridge, became Alberta's 88 town on January 1, 1961. In last month's issue Mr. Perry traced the early struggles of the settlement from the ranching era of 1882 to the extension of irrigation works in 1930. We pick up the story from 1932.)

Events were given a further favorable turn in 1932, when Claes Birck established a power plant in the city. In fact the inhabitants were so encouraged in that year that they built a community hall.

Progress was not very rapid during the remainder of the 1930's, but in 1941 the Vauxhall Co-operative Association was established, and this move is still being hailed as an important incentive to the improvement of local agriculture.

Then in 1942 the Vauxhall Community Pasture was established. This is still one of the largest in the Province and has had a marked effect on the pattern of stock raising operations in the district.

By 1949, the irrigation works were serving 2,500 acres—two and a half times the area under the ditch in 1924.

But the best was still to come, and 1950 was the year that brought the long-cherished "future" right down front and centre on the stage of the present.

The hamlet of Vauxhall—400 souls in all—was incorporated as a village (December 31, 1949) with Wesley Martin as the first mayor. A program of municipal public works was undertaken. Calgary Power Limited took over the Birck electric plant. Work was started on finances for a sewer and water system. And the federal government bought the assets of the Canada Land and Irrigation Company for \$2,250,000.

In the 11 years since that transaction was completed, long strides have been made toward expansion of the irrigation works to serve 240,000 acres. The combined total of works constructed by CL & I, the Province and PFRA now serves 122,000 acres in the Enchant, Vauxhall and Hays districts.

Vauxhall is central to this development, and was retained by the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, the federal agency which is now responsible for much of the work, as headquarters for the "Bow River Project".

The actual headquarters was established in 1951. Construction of the sewer and water system was started. With the immigration of PFRA employees and others attracted by the new activity, the population almost doubled within a short time.

In 1952 the sewer and water system was finished. A new school was built and named in honor of the late L.B. Thomson, then director of PFRA. And the federal department of agriculture established at Vauxhall an experimental substation to study irrigation problems.

In 1953 the drainage division of PFRA was moved to Vauxhall from Regina, and artificial ice was installed in the curling rink.

In 1954 the PFRA headquarters property was annexed to the village. HAYS CREATED

By 1955 the Expanse Coulee siphon, the Scope Reservoir and the Travers Dam had been completed and the new community of Hays was being created. Vauxhall acquired modern firefighting equipment.

In 1956 the Village joined the Barons-Eureka Health Unit.

In 1957 the first Vauxhall Agricultural Fair was held and work was begun on Highway 36, a new road link with Taber which confirmed Vauxhall in its position on the north-south axis of the Municipal District of Taber and the Taber School Division.

In 1958 the bridge carrying this highway across the Oldman River at the "Big Bend" was opened. Two further areas were annexed to the Village. A dehydration plant was established at Vauxhall and natural gas service reached the Village.

In the period since then, PFRA has drastically reduced its establishment at Vauxhall, but natural increase and immigration have almost made up for the removal of staff, and the new town will start out with a population of about 925.

NEW COUNCIL

The present village council will carry on until the fall of 1961, when a seven-man council will replace the three members now serving: Mayor Herman Feldbusch, Merv Natrass and Tage Birck.

One of the tasks facing these three in the meantime will be an all-out effort to attract a potato-processing industry. Vauxhall boosters point with pride to their location, central to half of southern Alberta's potato acreage, and claim their share could easily be increased by 50 per cent.

o Lethbridge Herald

SPEECH From The THRONE (From Page 1)

as a result of the constantly increasing costs of elementary and secondary education, my Government will submit for your consideration a new program of school financing designed to distribute the burden of school costs in a more equitable manner and to provide more effective control over such costs. You will also be asked to approve amendments to The School Act and The School Buildings Assistance Act together with appropriations to commence construction of a Northern Alberta Institute of Technology at Edmonton and the new School for the Physically Handicapped.

As the third phase in my Government's Five Year Development Program, you will be asked to give special consideration to matters in the field of Public Health. Construction of a new Provincial Hospital at Calgary together with a Diagnostic and Referral Centre will be proceeded with during the coming year. An extensive program to provide Auxiliary Hospitals, authorized under legislation passed at the last session of the Legislature, will be carried out.

In the field of Public Welfare, plans will be outlined during the session for a comprehensive program designed to relate welfare assistance more closely to individual need. Those who are currently recipients of Mothers' Allowance, Disabled Persons' Pension, Widows' Pension or Supplementary Allowances, will be given an option of continuing under the provisions of the present legislation or, alternatively, receiving the social allowance benefits provided under the program.

Amendments to The Child Welfare Act will be submitted for the purpose of clarifying administrative procedures.

Construction of homes for senior citizens, which was the initial phase of my Government's Five Year Development Program, will be proceeded with in the two major cities during the ensuing year.

NATURAL RESOURCES LEGISLATION

In the field of Natural Resources, necessary amendments to The Mines and Minerals Act and to The Oil and Gas Conservation Act will be submitted for your approval. Having regard for new and changing circumstances, my Government, in cooperation with the petroleum industry, proposes this year to make a comprehensive study of existing legislation and regulations pertaining to the exploration, development and marketing of oil and gas resources. The objective will be to revise such legislation and regulations, where necessary in the light of circumstances now prevailing, to ensure the continuation of a sound and efficient development program in the best interest of the people of the Province as a whole.

My Government intends to continue the program of street paving, sidewalk construction and the provision of recreational facilities carried on during the past year in towns, villages and hamlets as the second phase of the Five Year Development Program. (To Page 8)

SCHOOL FINANCES REVISED

(From Page 3)

to meet the cost of pupil transportation. Payments will be made on the basis of a per pupil per mile formula. A transportation distance from each district to the central school will be fixed and the amount payable will be determined by multiplying this distance by the number of pupils being transported from the district by a fixed annual rate. For example, if the transportation distance from a district to the central school is 12 miles and the number of pupils transported is 10 and the rate is \$20.00, the annual transportation payment to the division would be \$2,400.00. It should be understood that the \$20.00 rate is a purely hypothetical figure.

Operation and Maintenance of School Plant

This factor should consist of a fixed amount for each teacher employed.

Instructional Aids

This would consist of a fixed amount per teacher employed or per pupil in attendance.

Debenture Payments

This would consist of a fixed amount per pupil subject to the following conditions:

(1) If the fixed amount per pupil is not sufficient to meet annual debenture repayments, the amount would be increased to equal the repayment, but the excess would be recovered through the operation of the formula in future years.

(2) If the fixed amount exceeds actual debenture repayments the excess would be retained by the Department in a special capital fund to be drawn upon by the district when making capital expenditures in the future.

This arrangement would ensure fair and equal treatment for all school boards whatever their debenture debt position might be when the proposed plan is introduced.

Administration

This would be a small percentage of the total amount payable as determined by the other five factors in the formula.

UNAPPROVED COSTS AND CONTINGENCY GRANTS

What must be done in the event that payments under the foundation program do not meet in full the expenditures of a school board? In the answer to this question lies the third major difference between the proposed plan and the present system. Suppose, for example, that a board must expend \$750,000 but receives only \$700,000 through the foundation program. In that event the board would submit its own requisition to its municipal collecting authorities in the amount of \$50,000 to obtain the funds necessary to meet these unapproved costs in its budget, or, depending on the merits of the case, it might be able to obtain a contingency grant from the Department for all or part of this amount. For example, if it could be shown that the actual mill rate in 1961 has increased unduly over 1960, or that the board is not offering services and making expenditures beyond a reasonable level as compared with other boards, the Department would be justified in providing a contingency grant for an interim period until the financial position of the board has been stabilized.

The outline which I have been giving covers the highlights of the proposed new plan for school financing. There are still many details to be considered such as the treatment of previous surpluses and deficits incurred by a board, the manner of determining and sub-

mitting requisitions for unapproved costs, and so forth, which can be more fully and clearly explained when it is possible to quote exact figures to be used in arriving at the uniform mill rate and requisition, and in connection with the various factors in the foundation program formula.

At this point I should state that the foundation program formula would replace only the main operational grants now provided by the Department of Education. Various minor grants for special classes for handicapped children, equipment, isolation bonuses, evening classes, dormitories and so forth, would remain very much the same as at present.

ADVANTAGES

The main advantages of the plan which the Government is proposing may be summarized as follows:

(1) The portion of school costs to be borne by the municipal ratepayer will be more fairly and equally distributed than is presently the case.

(2) It will provide a better means of controlling spiralling costs than the present system. School boards will realize that if they increase their expenditures beyond the foundation program formula their own ratepayers will be called upon to pay the difference through local requisitions to meet unapproved costs.

(3) It will provide a good standard of school service in all parts of the Province without regard to local means. An equal educational opportunity for all is a basic principle of the new program.

(4) The formula provides for full equalization of financial support for all school districts, divisions and counties throughout the Province.

(5) While there is no guarantee in this plan that the uniform mill rate for school purposes will not increase in future—in fact the rate must increase if costs still continue to climb—it does ensure more stability in this regard than present arrangements.

(6) Last, but perhaps most important, the autonomy of school boards is preserved. They would still retain the power to requisition upon their municipalities for any funds which they may require in addition to the foundation program to the extent that their ratepayers will endorse local policies which require such additional requisitions.

The new plan for school financing proposed by the Government has been discussed with representatives of the Alberta School Trustees' Association and the Roman Catholic School Trustees' Association, and on the basis of these discussions I believe it is fair to assume that both the public and separate school systems will cooperate in adopting and applying this new plan. There are still many problems in developing the new system which only experience can solve, but with the co-operation and assistance of all parties concerned I am confident the proposal will succeed and will bring about many improvements.

In this connection I would point out that for the past two years the Alberta School Trustees' Association, in consultation with the Faculty of Education of the University of Alberta, has devoted much study to the matter of school grant formulas, and I am happy to be able to report that the Government's proposal is in keeping with all of the following general principles in connection with the payment of school grants which have been endorsed by the Trustees' Association:

- (1) The main grant should be of an equalization type;
- (2) Its purpose should be to raise local school revenues up to some previously defined level;
- (3) The previously defined level, known as a foundation program, should be set realistically so that it compares closely to the costs of essential services at current prices;
- (4) All school units should raise tax funds at a common mill rate in order to provide their share of the foundation program;
- (5) The balance of the foundation program should be secured by grant.

MISCELLANY

LONG TIME, NO SEE . . . Way back in February, 1928, Walter Linde of Dorchester, Iowa, overpaid his taxes on a quarter of Alberta land by 78 cents, so a cheque was drawn for the amount and mailed to him.

On January 19, 1961, the cheque came back . . . with a query from Mr. Linde if it was still good. He said it had "been misplaced all these years". (P.S. He got a brand new one.)

Provincial Treasurer's
Municipal Affairs - Imprest Account
N° M 12924

Department of Municipal Affairs
Province of Alberta

Edmonton FEB 21 1928

Pay to the order of Walter Linde

THE SUM OF \$0 AND 78 CTS 100 Dollars \$ 0.78

For Refund

704 - 1928

THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA

Countersigned
Ed Smith
Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs

J. Mc Mahon
Clerk

REGATABLE WITHOUT CHARGE AT ALL BRANCHES OF THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA AND AT ALL BRANCHES OF OTHER BANKS BASED IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA.

LONG IN THE SERVICE

Captain Roald Amundsen discovered Canada's North-West Passage and the South Pole; and if you go to San Francisco, you can see the good ship "Gjøa" in which the former epic voyage was made. They've scooped out the sand and lodged the ship therein; they've constructed an iron fence and thereto have attached a plaque giving details of the journey.

Claude Jennings Amundsen, first cousin (once removed) of the famous explorer, is not a sea-faring man. Since January 1, 1922, he has been Secretary-Treasurer of the Town of Claresholm. Before that (from 1913 to 1921) he was a farmer; and before that, he sold real estate and insurance and (for three years) worked in a bank.



C. J. AMUNDSEN

position from 1922 until 1941.

Mr. Amundsen has served in the hospital field also. He was Secretary-Treasurer of the Town hospital for nine years after which he held the same position with the Claresholm Municipal Hospital No. 24 for three years. To round out his remarkable record, he has at the same time been local Police Magistrate for twenty-four years.

Mr. Amundsen was born at Devils Lake, North Dakota, on April 6, 1892, and came to Alberta with his parents at the age of ten years. His public and high schooling completed at Claresholm, he took a business course at Alberta College in Edmonton. It was following his graduation here that he joined the bank.

Mr. Amundsen was once secretary-treasurer of the Claresholm Board of Trade. He is active in the United Church of Canada and is a member of the local Men's Club. His son (Alan) is Electrical Superintendent at Penticton, B.C., and his daughter (Miriam) is the wife of Dr. R.H. Dougall of the Baker Clinic in Edmonton.

SPEECH From The THRONE (From Page 6)

You will be asked to provide the necessary funds to continue modern highways construction, including divided multi-lane arteries. Provision will be made for additional campsites and improvements to existing campsites along our roads, which facilities have proven most popular with the travelling public.

A major expansion program is proposed for the coming year by the Alberta Government Telephones. While continuing its dial conversion program to all centres, the department will place emphasis on the improvement of services to farm communities by stimulating the growth of Mutual Telephone Companies and by providing better services to small settlements.

An extensive program of necessary Public Works is planned including additional administrative, educational and institutional buildings and hospitals. To assist in alleviating unemployment, my Government intends to make contract provision for work to be done, whenever feasible, during winter months.

BROADER TAX BASE

Comprehensive studies have been conducted during the past year with the objective of devising a more equitable distribution of the burden of taxation on real property. To this end, legislation designed to broaden the tax base and establish a more equitable basis for real property taxation throughout the Province will be submitted for your consideration.

Amendments to various statutes affecting municipalities, designed to further facilitate and improve their administration, will be introduced for your approval.

The operation of the Alberta Municipal Finance Corporation will be continued during the ensuing year. Every effort will be made to obtain funds at the lowest possible interest rates and to restrict borrowings to essential capital projects. Opportunity will be afforded Alberta

citizens, through the Provincial Treasury Branches, to invest in debentures issued to finance essential projects in this Province.

You will be asked to consider a new Expropriation Act providing for more uniform and equitable procedures for expropriation of land.

* * * *

I leave you now to the business of this session in confidence that you will discharge your duties and responsibilities in the interests of all our people. I pray that Divine Providence will guide and bless you throughout your deliberations.

THOMAS ROBINSON PASSES

Thomas Milton Robinson, chairman of Stettler County No. 6, died suddenly at his farm home near Liberal School on January 15. He was 70.

* * * *

The death of Thomas M. Robinson closes a rich chapter of public service in local government. He dominated the municipal government scene here for more than a quarter of a century as he made it almost a career. He served this district well right up until the time of his passing at the comparatively early age of 70 and his wide experience, common sense and humor will be sorely missed at more than a half-dozen official tables.

In his years of public office the changes have been phenomenal. His old Municipal District of Waverly was absorbed by the enlarged Municipal District of Stettler and then became the County of Stettler. The tiny School District of Liberal was swallowed up by Stettler School Division and it in turn became part of the County of Stettler. Dirt trails and lovers' lanes became all-weather market highways and one-room school houses that dotted the landscape were abandoned for great school plants with gymnasiums, auditoriums, laboratories and home economics departments. Local government became the biggest business of the district, spending more than one million dollars a year. He took it all in his stride. In fact, he was always one step ahead of change. Some day we hope one of the County's magnificent schools or hospitals will be named for him.

o Stettler Independent

CITY OF RED DEER HONORED

First of its kind for Alberta, a "Certificate of Conformance" has been awarded to the City of Red Deer by the Municipal Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada with headquarters in Chicago.

News of the citation was contained in a letter from Joseph F. Clark, MFOA executive director, to R.N. McGregor, City Treasurer of Red Deer, and is the result of the Alberta official's work in preparing the "Annual Financial Report" of the City for the year ending December 31, 1959.

The letter states the Red Deer Report "substantially conformed with the high standards for financial reporting" established by the Association and the National Committee on Government Accounting.

In congratulating the City of Red Deer and Mr. McGregor on a "notable achievement," the MFOA executive's letter says:

"The City of Red Deer is the 105th governmental unit to receive this award for distinguished financial reporting. It is the first governmental unit in the Province of Alberta to be so recognized.

"This Association has reviewed over 1,100 submitted annual financial reports. Including the City of Red Deer, certificates have been awarded for financial reports prepared by 3 states, 6 counties, 8 special districts, 75 United States municipalities, and 13 Canadian municipalities.

"An embellished certificate with suitable inscription, issued as of February 9, 1961, will be mailed to you as soon as it is received from our artist."

The record summarized in Mr. Clark's letter covers the period since the inception of the award in 1946. Over the past 15 years, certificates have been awarded to five centres in Quebec and three in Ontario. Western Canadian communities similarly honored are Victoria (1952), Cranbrook and Enderby (1957) in British Columbia and Prince Albert, Saskatchewan in 1951.



R.N. MCGREGOR